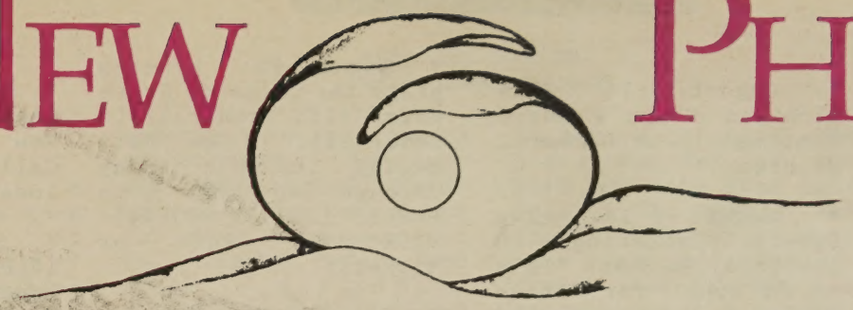
# NEW PHAZES



COLORADO SPRINGS' LESBIAN NEWSLETTER

August 1994 Vol. 7 No. 1

**Dear Community:**

**You know...life simply flashes by...**

**Flashing by so fast that the details of our lives are always at risk of getting lost forever, unless something is done to capture them. Diaries, photographs, poems, songs, writings, and drawings are some of the many ways that a moment can be pinned so that it doesn't fly away into the air. Capturing the times -- and the people who make the times -- is what this newsletter has always been about...AND THIS ISSUE MARKS THE 7TH ANNIVERSARY IT'S BEEN DOING JUST THAT!** So, settle in for a good read. Think of it as a holiday we planned for you, dear reader, with surprises, memories, adventures...the news we know you like to be the first to know.

You have to hand it to the homos. We know how to gather.

We traverse continents, ford oceans, and endure Greyhound cavalcades just to be with each other in undeniable numbers. Sex has little to do with it. These queer congregations are, first of all, a way to keep the bashers at bay. But there's another reason why we flock. In a society so dedicated to our disappearance, bringing vast numbers of lesbians and gay men together reconstitutes the world, turning parade routes and rally sites, whole downtown areas, into an image of the future that no longer forces us to keep our feelings so painfully confined. That exhilaration we feel in each other's company is the buzz of redemption. So whether you went to Stonewall 25, to the Gay Games, or to the Pridefest celebration in Colorado Springs...it was a healing ceremony. A queer "tikkun," of sorts. Thanks for your support.

A special thanks to Tamara and Rita for their help in bringing July's issue together, as well as to Shelley and Lucy for tending to the table during the Pridefest celebration on Sunday, July 17.

Please note that, with this anniversary issue, the staff unanimously decided to include "Dear Auntie Pearl," which will run each month. Your feedback on this "literary piece of art" would be appreciated, as would any comment(s) you choose to give...about anything...anytime.

And for those of you who're planning to visit Rome, Italy, there's now a lesbian bathhouse you can scope-out (at Via Persio 4), according to the internet Euro-Queer Mailing List. Offered are a Turkish bath, a Finnish sauna, a whirlpool, a gym, a bar, and lesbian videos. Write down this phone number: 011-39-6-718-4378...and work on your Italian, okay, 'cuz English isn't spoken. Ciao!

See ya next month!

The staff of New Phazes

The staff of New Phazes

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A NIVERSARY

HAPPY

I've got a cramp with your name on it!

# GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

* From now till August 28: New York photographer Joan Roth's unique vision of Jewish women from over a dozen countries is on exhibit at the Mizel Museum of Judaica, 560 S. Monaco Parkway, Denver.

* August 6: Bonnie "Ya Gotta Love Those Thighs" Blair will be the grand marshal of the Pikes Peak or Bust parade in downtown Colorado Springs.

* August 8-14: The Michigan Womyn's Music Festival in Hart, Michigan.

* August 9-14: Two Spirit Gathering in Lawrence, Kansas. This is an event for Native American gays and lesbians, their families, and friends. For more information, call (913) 749-0642.

* August 10: New Phazes staff meeting at 7 p.m. Call 634-0236 for location.

Aug. 28

* August 20: Wynonna plays the Colorado State Fair ($15 general/$17 reserved). The Fair begins its run today through September 5 in Pueblo. Call 1-800-444-FAIR for info or tickets.

* Going away party for Tina Pillonetti from "noon till people fall over" at 1119 W. Kiowa Ave., lower level. For details, call 634-0236.

* August 29: Collating the September issue of New Phazes at 6 p.m. Call 634-0236 for location.

* September 1-5: The 15th annual West Coast Women's Music & Comedy Festival in the foothills of Yosemite National Park, California. For more information, call (818) 893-4075 or fax (818) 893-1593.

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WRITE YOUR AUNTIE PEARL

Dear Auntie Pearl: Please tell me if I'm wrong to try to save my relationship. Here's my situation: My lover "Carrie" can't get over her ex. It's been 4 years since her ex left Carrie (we've been together 3 years), and Carrie still won't speak to her. Carrie won't go to Provincetown or the Michigan music festival because they went there. She won't go to some restaurants, she won't talk to some of my best friends or go to their parties. You get the picture.

I've respected her wishes, and I've missed out on a lot of things. This week, she gave me the silent treatment because I talked to her ex in the grocery store. I finally told her that it had gone on long enough, and she blew up at me. She accused me of just pretending to be on her side all these years. It's not like I can tell Carrie to go to a shrink. She already does. So what's left to do?

I hope you'll see something I'm missing, because I'm ready to call it quits. I know she loves me, but should I give up hoping that Carrie will ever feel as deeply for me as she does for her ex?

Haunted in the Northeast

Dear Haunted: If Carrie's ex showed up tomorrow with an engagement ring and two tickets to Hawaii, your lover would run quicker than cheap mascara in a monsoon. Carrie cares as much about her ex as you seem to care about your needs. This isn't about getting over lost love, it's about fear of intimacy. You and Carrie are each pursuing an inaccessible woman.

Before you call it quits, give your life some attention. You want to go to Provincetown? Go. You miss your favorite eatery? Take yourself out. Nobody has the right to determine who you talk to or where you socialize. Once Carrie sees that you won't sit home and iron her crying towels, she'll snap-to and realize that life is passing her by. If that doesn't work, get thee to a couples counselor.

(Your Auntie Pearl appears in publications nationwide. Send your questions or comments to: Auntie Pearl, P.O. Box 4156, Burlington, VT 05406.)

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# Pride '94

AND THEY DANCED...
by Suzanne Becker

I usually make it a point to avoid the term "warm fuzzy". It reminds me too much of suburbs and sorority girls (no offense to anyone, just this person's opinion). However, after this year's Pridefest Rally and Parade, well, no matter how hard I tried, that's how it left me feeling.

I must admit, along with my excitement for the festivities, I also had a few apprehensions. Quite frankly, I was not sure of what to expect. And my apprehensions seemed confirmed, as, on the morning of the Parade, while walking to the park and eavesdropping on the two men walking in front of me I heard, "Do you think they'll be here again?" "I don't know," replied the second guy. "But if you get eggs thrown at you, just smile and keep walking."

Who are "they" I wondered, and what about these eggs? Seems naive, I admit. Until now, however, the only parades I'd ever attended had been in New York, Chicago, Atlanta and Washington, D.C. All fairly large events, where my presence was just another one of the hundreds of thousands of bodies in attendance.

Here I am though, in Colorado Springs, where my presence, or the presence of any queer for that matter, is visible, crucial and in my opinion, a necessity. People need to know that we are here, living amongst them. We are not weird, alien-invaders masquerading as "normal citizens" by day, and homosexuals on nights and weekends, as might be seen in some Body Snatcher-type movie. We function as normal, productive, everyday and even sometimes boring parts of society. We look act, eat, drink, bathe and slip on our Birks just like everyone else. This year's parade and rally definitely celebrated and conveyed just that (as well as dispelled my ridiculous mixed feelings).

At 10:15am, as the rally in Acacia Park began, the grass was still wet and some vendors were still setting up, but the people were trickeling in. The first people to actually catch my eye were a family of 5 -- two parents, two kids, one dog. They appeared to have accidently wandered over from church, judging from their church-like attire (not many folks wear suit/tie and pastel dresses to a rally), though I'm not sure where the dog fit in. But they seemed content roaming from vendor to vendor, before stopping and settling underneath a tree.

By 11:00, all of the vendors were set up and in full vend. They consisted of Springs-based businesses and groups, as well as a handful from Denver, Pueblo and even Summit County. As usual, t-shirts, jewelry, literature and helpful info abounded, along with pink triangle-adorned bath towels and other homo-sloganed items such as ties, postcards and buttons. And, of course, as there should be at every parade, some pretty decent food. Dogs, burgers and Polish sausages were plentiful. For the barbarian in all of us, grilled turkey drumsticks (they were huge) were available. For dessert, the local P-FLAGers offered some very awesome cookies. But, as I overheard a woman ask (eavesdropping once again), "Aren't there any tofu stands here?"

As noon approached, the grass was dry and the park was more than half full. The energy was there; this was going to be a great day - and not a protester in sight. I was engrossed in people-watching. There were people milling, dancing, juggling, eating, conversing and walking hand-in-hand. I was so engrossed, I must admit, that I did not even notice that the rally on stage had begun. The one act that eventually caught my eye was an all-girl band from Albuquerque, New Mexico. Led by a singer named Storm, the band, Too F.I.N.E. Minds, rocked for about 25 minutes, with some great tunes, strong, yet sultry voices and a searing guitar. They ended with your basic Indigo Girl-esque song, but if you ever get a chance to catch their act, do. Anyway, I think this is where the warm fuzzy thing began.

Ah yes, everyone loves a parade. I don't know who said it, but they were right. By about 12:45, people were lining the sides of the streets, waiting for the march to begin. The parade definitely had all of the elements that I was used to: signs, banners, floats, drag queens, painted faces, outrageous outfits, a little bit of leather, a few bikes and lots of happy people. The only contigent conspicuously missing were the Dykes on Bikes - a personal favorite.

Very much to my surprise, the parade began on time - 1:00 pm. A first in my parade career. The fifty-minute or so march was peaceful, unconfrontational and overall, pretty gay (as in happy).

The march ended back at the park, and as it filled with people again, things began hopping. Great music pulsated from the stage... and people danced. And danced. And cheered. And celebrated.

This being my first parade in Colorado Springs, I wasn't sure of how it compared to the past few, so I took to the crowd to find out what people thought. Bill, one of the organizers, thought things were going quite well. He said there were more vendors this year, as well as people.

Carolyn Davis, who had come in from Pueblo with the organization Pueblo After 2, also thought things were well organized, with a great turn-out. Because Pueblo does not have a Pridefest, they came here to celebrate.

cont'd on pg. 4

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cont'd from pg. 3

Barbara & Keith Bond, and Phyllis & Chuck Hugins made the two and a half hour drive from Dillon, Colorado, to our fine city, to show their support for their gay children. They are the founders of the Summit County P-FLAG chapter, in existence since last November. They came, Barbara Bond told me, because, "P-FLAG is an important contingency."

She pointed out that many people will listen to them before they will listen to us. "We are sometimes more likely to get through to people...they identify. They see us as parents, just like they are." Right on.

As the afternoon progressed, the number of people in the park continued to grow. Much of the crowd's attention had become focused on the stage. Mixed in amongst the speakers were the usual crowd-capturing drag performances, along with some lip-synching numbers, reminiscent of the Villiage People at their worst.

The best part of the rally, though, was the last quarter. Coinciding with Dr. Mel White's speech, the clouds rolled in and a refreshing drizzle followed. As if following along with his speech, the rain began slowly. As White grew more intense, so did the rain; but not one person moved. White's speech was short, but it was very powerful, delivering a message to not just the gay and lesbian community, but on a more universal level. "When you hate, your spirit shrivels. When you love, your spirit grows."

Shortly after Mel White's speech ended, the rain ceased, and the second highlight of the entertainment began. It was the only dance routine in the line-up, but the performance by Tina Pillonetti and Kathryn Miller was well worth the wait. Tasteful, erotic, warm and captivating is the only way I can describe it. They moved their bodies in ways that I certainly can't.

As always, the Diversity Chorus gave a delightful and energetic performance. Half of the fun was listening; the other half was watching the animated directing of Lyn Boudreau.

Capping off the day's events was a performance by Kathy Drieling. It was the first time I had seen her play (great on the bass), and hopefully not the last.

5:00ish pm. Acacia Park was emptying. Vendors were beginning to pack up. The grass was wet again from the rain. Somewhere between 2000-5000 (depending on which paper you read) had packed the park. Sensory overload, seven hours of sun, and mounting hunger told me it was time to leave. As I walked out of the park toward my car, I turned back just once more for a final glance - in a very Hollywood-type style, I might add. And then...I could feel it happening again. Try as I might, there was no stopping it. No denying it. There I was, standing between two cops and a road block, and I could feel it happening. From my toes up to my head...warm fuzzy.

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**When:** Saturday, September 10, 1994
9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

**Cost:** $140/couple (lunch included)

**Where:** Location to be announced

***To Register:***

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*LOVE MATTERS™ came into being to celebrate and support lesbian and gay relationships.*

# SPORT ★

## TEAM COLORADO STRIKES GOLD, SILVER AND BRONZE IN NEW YORK CITY

Team Colorado athletes were more than a little impressive in New York City in late June -- they were incredible, coming home with more bronze, silver and gold than they'd received in previous competitions.

The 16-member women's soccer team, including Colorado Springs' own Jennifer Hickman, Nicole Plotkin, Carrie Delius and Rebecca C., easily took the gold from all other teams that travelled from around the world. Competing in the women's open division (competitive), Colorado beat Wisconsin's Bovine Babes in the final game 3-1, giving the silver to the dairy state.

Kim Roy, also of Colorado Springs, took a bronze in her weight class in wrestling.

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# AMENDMENT #2 UPDATE

In a last-ditch effort to save Amendment 2, the anti-gay-rights measure, state lawyers (on June 30, 1994) were expected to tell the Colorado Supreme Court that the state's moral direction is for all the people to determine, not just gays and lesbians and their friends.

Lawyers representing Colorado Attorney General Gale Norton hope to convince the high court that there is a compelling justification for the amendment -- a test the court says the state must meet if Amendment 2 is to survive.

The measure, which would eliminate and forbid any laws providing special protection to homosexuals, was passed by voters on November 3, 1992, but never has taken effect because of legal challenges. It has sparked impassioned debate and a temporary boycott of Colorado by gay-rights supporters.

Now, the seven Supreme Court justices are set to hear Judge Jeff Bayless' ruling and hear state arguments that compelling reasons for the amendment exist. Legal opinion has it that this measure will make it all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, no matter what.

**(The Human Rights Campaign Fund, the nation's largest lesbian and gay political group, announced recently they will donate $40,000 to fight the court challenge on the constitutionality of Amendment 2. The donation is the largest single contribution to the legal effort to overturn the amendment.)**

(Taken from the June 30, 1994 issue of The Denver Post)

## In the "Best Interest of the Child"

HOMOSEXUALITY DOES NOT MAKE PARENT UNFIT, COURT RULES

Overturning a lower court decision that had awarded custody of a lesbian's child to his grandmother, the Virginia Court of Appeals unanimously ruled (in late June in Richmond) that a person's homosexuality does not necessarily make that individual an unfit parent.

"The social science evidence showed a person's sexual orientation does not strongly correlate with that person's fitness as a parent," Judge Sam W. Coleman III wrote for the court, which reunited Sharon L. Bottoms, 24, of Richmond, with her son, Tyler Doustou, 2.

Among other things, the ruling turned aside the lower court's finding that because homosexual acts are illegal in Virginia a lesbian is disqualified as a mother.

Marc E. Elovitz, a counsel in New York for the American Civil Liberties Union, which represented Ms. Bottoms, said the opinion was broadly written and would help protect homosexual parents nationwide. "The court is saying you have to look at parenting ability, not just stereotypes or prejudice," Elovitz said.

(Taken from the June 22, 1994 issue of The New York Times)


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# Special Article
## by Cate Terwilliger

I am thinking of death. I am wondering about separation.

Five years ago, during a visit to Connecticut, I walked through a cemetery. The mossy headstones were centuries old, their facades crumbling. This had been a favorite pastime, a peaceful pastime: walking among the stones, reading the names and dates, the inscriptions. Imagining lives.

But on this day, the names inscribed themselves in my mind, forming a list, name after name: born then, died then. Husbands, wives, fathers, mothers, and those like us, too, those whose markers betrayed no coupling. Still: How often had their bodies been musky with yearning, sweaty with sex?

Now decomposed, dispossessed, now embraced by rotting wood, silent beneath my feet. Now estranged, isolated: all these spent lives and passions, the accumulated weight of all these separations.

One morning last month, I was driving home from the Garden of the Gods and came upon what I at first took to be a typical road kill: a squirrel, a rabbit. Then I saw the two perfect mule deer ears, and the dark sheen of a black hoof in the shameless sun.

I gave myself the usual 10 seconds to keep driving, not wanting to look at this horror and not able to leave it out there, either, knowing what it had been. Then I wheeled my truck around.

What it had become was this: an immaculate fawn's head, soft-eared, black -nosed, a row of small teeth between parted lips, eyes blue-clouded with death. What it had become was simply this head, with a flap of soft, speckled fur hanging off where the neck should have been, cherry blood and shards of bone where the body should have followed. And curled next to it, but not attached, a folded leg.

I picked this baby up by her perfect soft ears, gathered her leg and climbed to a place where I could lay her in the dirt under a scrubby old bush.

I looked on both sides of the road for the rest of her body; I found no trace. And I noticed as I drove away that the road was perfectly clean, that nobody who came after me would have any inkling of what had happened there.

I am thinking of death. I am wondering about separation.

I am remembering a former newsroom colleague, a strong woman I respect immensely. I am remembering a December day at work six years ago, the precise moment she learned her husband had been killed in a snowy wreck. I am remembering the sound she made, a sound a roomful of writers could never describe and would never forget.

I am thinking, too, of a woman I loved who loved life better than anyone, a woman who shone with a pure light. I am thinking of this beautiful woman whose tenderness and exuberance called God out of everyone she touched, called God out to play, called God out to love. I am thinking of how she shone like that for three years while the cancer ate her insides, and how she died, at 40, shining like a nova.

In her book, "Islands, The Universe, Home," Gretel Ehrlich recalls what a painter once told her. "You have to mix death into everything," he said. "Then, you have to mix life into that."

Ehrlich writes: "After fruition, after death, after black ash, perhaps there is something more, even if it is only the droppings of a scavenger, or bones pointing every which way as if to say, 'Touch here, touch here,' and the velocity of the abyss when a loved one goes his way, and the way wind stirs hard over fresh graves, and the emptying out of souls into rooms ...."

I am hoping for more; I am counting on more. I am imagining with the poet, Mary Oliver, that

... maybe death
isn't darkness, after all,
but so much light
wrapping itself around us –
as soft as feathers –
that we are instantly weary
of looking, and looking, and shut
our eyes,
not without amazement,
and let ourselves be carried,
as through the translucence of
mica,
to the river
that is without the least dapple or
shadow –
that is nothing but light – scalding,
aortal light –
in which we are washed and
washed
out of our bones.

Telling it like it is

# Health Talk

**WOMEN SEE GREATER INCREASES IN AIDS**

**United States Surgeon General Joycelynn Elders, speaking to a Boston group recently, said AIDS is increasing among women four times as fast as it is among men, with the majority of the women of color being infected from intravenous drug use or sex with an infected partner. Elders said that less than one percent of the nation's $940 billion health care bill is spent on AIDS prevention services.**

MEDICAL SCHOOLS LOOKING MORE CLOSELY AT WOMEN'S HEALTH ISSUES

A number of medical schools and teaching hospitals have begun to rethink their curricula to incorporate more medical issues affecting women. Some institutions have installed women's health tracks in their residency programs. Others are offering classes to practicing physicians to keep them apprised of new research about women's health. The changes have reportedly caused controversy within medical schools over who should teach women's health and, more specifically, who should care for women.

**While health care reform has made primary care a trendy concept, many healthy women still go to two doctors: an internist for a sore throat and a gynecologist for a regular pelvic and breast exam, for example.** Health activists hope that with revised training, more doctors will be able to provide one-stop service for women, thus cutting their medical bills in half.

Medical schools are making their curriculum changes, in part to accommodate an explosion of interest in women's health, which comes after a highly publicized 1990 study by the General Accounting Office raised concerns about the uneven numbers of women in clinical trials sponsored by the National Institutes of Health. Since then, research has surged. In fiscal 1994, for example, the government is spending an estimated $263 million on breast-cancer research, compared with $92.7 million in 1991.

(Please note that the two previous selections were taken from the June 1994 Colorado Woman News.)

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# BITS & PIECES

BY JACQUELYN BEYER

**Family Vignettes--The Values Front** (cont.--from July/August--*Out* interviews by Michaelangelo Signorille), part 1: 4) A black 18-year old lesbian with a turbulent 4 year history since leaving an abusive mother (father in prison) tolive with a grandmother in Minneapolis--family saw her and parents as outcasts--led to a street life, hospitalization for depression, and numerous foster homes, shelters and finally a youth group home where a sympathetic friend helped her find a home with a white lesbian couple already the parents of an AI son and an adopted black daughter. Her criticism of the general adult lesbian community is the failure to support adolescents in being themselves with no pressure to be a particular kind of lesbian; 5) an 18-year old lesbian, fully out at home and school, who lives with a born-again mother but feels more support from a divorced father--is willing to take all the heat because being true to herself is the most comfortable way she can live and she is glad to be a gay person when so much is happening. (cont. below)

**Cruising the Media:** Since I last reported to you there has been a rush in the mainstream media what with trying to catch up with history and changes in law and opinion. First the low note in the *Colorado Alumnus* about the U of C regents' veto of the effort in Boulder to provide health benefits, a resource center and gay/lesbian studies--according to the regents only private donations can be used to fund such initiatives. So do gay and lesbian taxpayers get a check-off on their taxes? But then there is the coverage for the week of celebration in New York by the venerable *Times*--noted elsewhere. Plus: "Sweden OKs bill allowing gay nuptials"; Janet Reno issues order allowing gays/lesbians to seek political asylum by showing danger of persecution in home country; "Utah Lesbian Sues for Visitation Rights"; a study issued at Univ. of Colorado Health Sciences Center and Children's Hospital shows that "a child is more than 100 times as likely to be molested by a relative's heterosexual partner than by a homosexual"; Presbyterians opened the door for continuing negotiations about ordination by refusing to include a strong ban against gays/lesbians in the church constitution; "Lesbian Daughter Opposes Anti-gay Father" (Cobb County commissioner who backed anti-gay resolution). Plus dozens more.

**On to the Future:** In an Op-Ed piece in the Denver Post, Phil Nash uses the Stonewall 25 story as a peg to look at what the future promises. In summary: 1) a victory for a Federal anti-job discrimination law plus expansion of family law to encompass benefits, accepted gay unions and inclusion of children as part of gay/lesbian families; 2) increased influence of gay social and cultural institutions on mainstream life as of knowledge and funds from anti-Aids efforts are rechanelled to all kinds of community structures along with increased bequeaths from Stonewall generation gays and lesbians; 3) influence on ways the mainstream thinks about aging as the constructed families of older gay men and lesbians become models, especially with the experience of so much death, dying and grief from the AIDs epidemic. What about Amendment 2 type attacks? They are ". . in the longer view of history the squeaks and squawks of change. . the full acceptance of homosexuality in the culture will require two or three generations."

**Sports on the Front Burner:** June was not only the month for the Gay Olympics (there--I've said it!) but also for a memorable partial good-bye to Martina. Those who watched know that she lost in a remarkably played match by the newcomer, Conchita Martinez. And that she handled the loss like the real champion she will always be. The anonymous, and frequently misogynist, writer of the *Denver Post's* sports column, "Pike's Peek" noted on July 3: "Peek-a-Yea: To Martina Navratilova. Thanks for giving the world one last look at the best and classiest athlete in women's tennis. May the slopes of Aspen be as blessed by your presence as were the lawns of Wimbleton." Different from the editorial page "who needs Martina Navratilova in Colorado?" after her despairing response to the passage of Amendment 2. Also note the July 18 column by feminist commentator Diane Carman where she contrasts the failure of the media to dump O.J. after an arrest and prosecution for wife-beating --exemplifying the willingness to "turn goons into millionaires"--while closing out Martina because of image problems--". .despite all her achievements, Navratilova was just not bankable.. . .In the courts of public opinion, Martina Navratilova was vilified and sentenced to a lifetime financial penalty for candor and honesty. But with a good lawyer, proper spin control and plenty of publicity, wife-beating and sexual harassment can be downright profitable."

**Family Vignettes, cont.:** 6) An 18-year-old gay young man, sexually abused since 4 by baby-sitters, relatives, friends of parents until he blew the whistle on a minister who had abused him and his brother. Defiant about self-identified gayness in school in a small town, he left at age 17 after trying suicide; now has good relations with parents who accept his life and friends--has mainstream middle-class ambitions; 7) a 23-year-old daughter of divorced gay man and a bisexual mother--her major constraint was the stereotype that gay parents raise gay children. Now living in San Francisco it took her a long time to come out to her parents.

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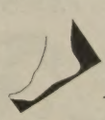

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# CREATIVE CORNER

AUDRE LORDE, born, 1934, U.S.A.

## ON A NIGHT OF THE FULL MOON

I

Out of my flesh that hungers
and my mouth that knows
comes the shape I am seeking
for reason.
The curve of your waiting body
fits my waiting hand
your breasts warm as sunlight
your lips quick as young birds
between your thighs the sweet
sharp taste of limes.

Thus I hold you
frank in my heart's eye
in my skin's knowing
as my fingers conceive your flesh
I feel your stomach
moving against me.

Before the moon wanes again
we shall come together.

II

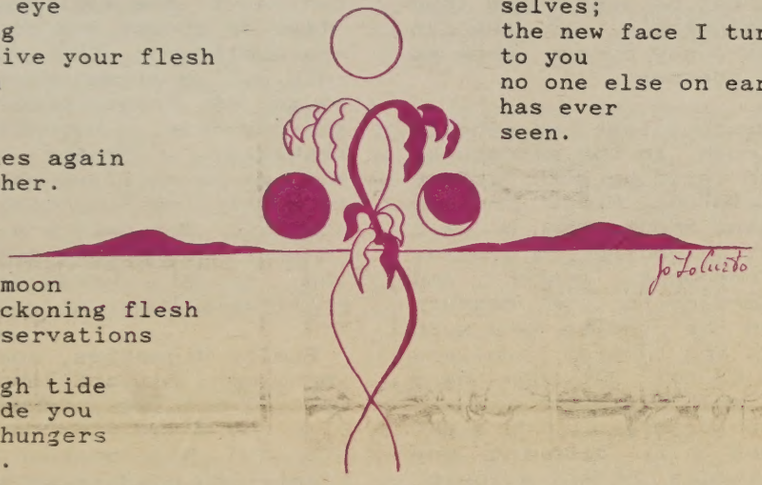
And I would be the moon
spoken over your beckoning flesh
breaking against reservations
beaching thought
my hands at your high tide
over and under inside you
and the passing of hungers
attended, forgotten.

Darkly risen
the moon speaks
my eyes
judging your roundness
delightful.

ALICE WALKER, born 1944, U.S.A.

## NEW FACE

I have learned not to worry about love;
but to honor its coming
with all my heart.
To examine the dark mysteries
of the blood
with headless heed and
swirl,
to know the rush of feelings
swift and flowing
as water.
The source appears to be
some inexhaustible
spring
within our twin and triple
selves;
the new face I turn up
to you
no one else on earth
has ever
seen.



(Both works of poetry were taken from "Ain't I A Woman!" which was edited by Illona Linthwaite.)

BUTCH No 2
...this is it !!! ...i'm on the prowl tonight !!
...watch out !! «THE BUTCH» has arrived!!!
... with an eagle eye; ...with carnivorous instinct, she stalks her prey ...
... senses alert, she moves in for the kill
hello
...euh, euh... hehe he...
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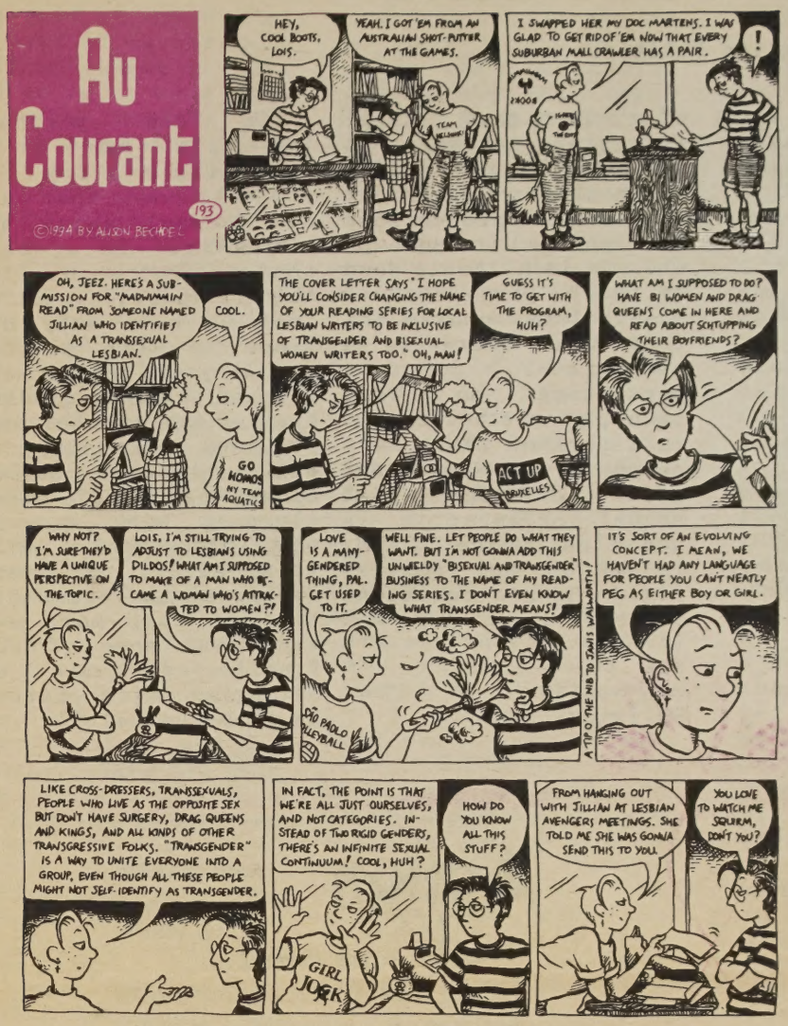
Au Courant
193
©1994 BY ALISON BECHDEL
HEY, COOL BOOTS, LOIS.
YEAH. I GOT 'EM FROM AN AUSTRALIAN SHOT-PUTTER AT THE GAMES.
I SWAPPED HER MY DOC MARTENS. I WAS GLAD TO GET RID OF 'EM NOW THAT EVERY SUBURBAN MALL CRAWLER HAS A PAIR.
OH, JEEZ. HERE'S A SUBMISSION FOR "MADWOMAN READ" FROM SOMEONE NAMED JILLIAN WHO IDENTIFIES AS A TRANSSEXUAL LESBIAN.
COOL.
GO HOMOS MY TEAM AQUATICS
THE COVER LETTER SAYS "I HOPE YOU'LL CONSIDER CHANGING THE NAME OF YOUR READING SERIES FOR LOCAL LESBIAN WRITERS TO BE INCLUSIVE OF TRANSGENDER AND BISEXUAL WOMEN WRITERS TOO." OH, MAN!
GUESS IT'S TIME TO GET WITH THE PROGRAM, HUH?
ACT UP BRUSSELES
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO? HAVE BI WOMEN AND DRAG QUEENS COME IN HERE AND READ ABOUT SCHTUPPING THEIR BOYFRIENDS?
WHY NOT? I'M SURE THEY'D HAVE A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE ON THE TOPIC.
LOIS, I'M STILL TRYING TO ADJUST TO LESBIANS USING DILDOS! WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO MAKE OF A MAN WHO BECAME A WOMAN WHO'S ATTRACTED TO WOMEN?!
LOVE IS A MANY-GENDERED THING, PAL. GET USED TO IT.
WELL FINE. LET PEOPLE DO WHAT THEY WANT. BUT I'M NOT GONNA ADD THIS UNWIELDY "BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER" BUSINESS TO THE NAME OF MY READING SERIES. I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT TRANSGENDER MEANS!
GO PAOLO VOLLEYBALL
A TIP O' THE NIB TO JAMES WALWORTH!
IT'S SORT OF AN EVOLVING CONCEPT. I MEAN, WE HAVEN'T HAD ANY LANGUAGE FOR PEOPLE YOU CAN'T NEATLY PEG AS EITHER BOY OR GIRL.
LIKE CROSS-DRESSERS, TRANSSEXUALS, PEOPLE WHO LIVE AS THE OPPOSITE SEX BUT DON'T HAVE SURGERY, DRAG QUEENS AND KINGS, AND ALL KINDS OF OTHER TRANSGRESSIVE FOLKS. "TRANSGENDER" IS A WAY TO UNITE EVERYONE INTO A GROUP, EVEN THOUGH ALL THESE PEOPLE MIGHT NOT SELF-IDENTIFY AS TRANSGENDER.
IN FACT, THE POINT IS THAT WE'RE ALL JUST OURSELVES, AND NOT CATEGORIES. INSTEAD OF TWO RIGID GENDERS, THERE'S AN INFINITE SEXUAL CONTINUUM! COOL, HUH?
HOW DO YOU KNOW ALL THIS STUFF?
GIRL JOCK
FROM HANGING OUT WITH JILLIAN AT LESBIAN AVENGERS MEETINGS. SHE TOLD ME SHE WAS GONNA SEND THIS TO YOU.
YOU LOVE TO WATCH ME SQUIRM, DON'T YOU?

AS A CHILD YOU WOULDN'T ACCEPT CANDY FROM A STRANGER... AS AN ADULT WHY ACCEPT LIES FROM ONE?

For years people who don't even know us have told us that we'll never be happy, that we can't have long-lasting relationships, and--even worse--that God doesn't love us.

*BUT THOSE ARE LIES AND WE DON'T HAVE TO ACCEPT THEM ANY LONGER!*

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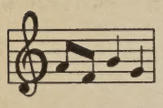

## Be Careful What You Wish For...

by Kristen Hall (High Street)

Musically, folksinger Kristen Hall has been dealing with her fear of intimacy since she released her first album, Real Life Stuff, in 1990. Like many of us Hall seems to pine for the ones who couldn't care if she lives or dies while dismissing those who are head over heels in love with her. In song after song the passionate, scratchy-voiced Hall details the torturous travails of her heart, her words backed up by poignant acoustic accompaniment.

Romantically not much has changed for Hall on her major-label debut, the affecting Be Careful What You Wish For..., the follow-up to 1991's Fact & Fiction, originally released on Indigo Girl Amy Ray's Daemon Records and reissued last year by High Street. Indeed, the album's title itself is an oblique declaration of ambivalence. On the disc's most spiritual song, "Let It Rain," Hall invokes a kind of baptism by precipitation to absolve her of the sins of obsessive, unrequited love. The singer's religious imagery is reinforced by a backup gospel choir: "I have given, I have given and got none / Still I'm driven by something I can't explain / It's not a cross; it is a choice." On "Don't Tell Me," the disc's only all-out rock song, Hall, wielding an electric guitar, views her messy romantic past with regret and rage: "Well, to tell the truth, I'm lonely / But that's a feeling I do well."

Regardless of the singer's often dim view of relationships, she cannot help hoping for the future, for a time when she and her partner will be able to transcend their various fears and truly devote their lives to each other. In the lovely, mandolin-enhanced country tune "Seeds of a Lifetime," the singer sees the light of love and commitment at the end of the tunnel.

With the money of a major label behind her, Hall achieves a larger, more intricately arranged sound on this disc, with guest starts like Matthew Sweet and Indigo Girl Emily Saliers offering their distinctive background vocals on a couple of cuts. Hall's lyrics too are more sophisticated than in the past, as if she's been to a therapist and learned better how to express her feelings in words. Whatever her means of psychic relief, let's hope Hall keeps making music as moving as the confessional gems here.

(Taken from the June 28, 1994 issue of The Advocate)

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# ONE QUEER PERSPECTIVE

## Identity Politics

**Have you ever considered what constitutes a "lesbian"? Or the standards we use to judge other lesbians?**

Stop and think about some of the questions we often ask of our lesbian sisters:

a. Are you "out" or not?

b. Are you a "gold-star" lesbian? (Have you kept your body untainted by never having slept with a man?)

c. Have you renounced sexual relationships with men for life?

d. Are you a lesbian-feminist?

e. Are you currently sleeping with a woman/women?

Unfortunately, women who can't answer "yes" to all of the above questions are often judged by other lesbians as not being "full" lesbians. Now, certainly many of you are thinking, "No, I wouldn't judge based on those premises." And perhaps you wouldn't vocalize such an opinion. Yet I have noticed that while many women will not overtly discriminate against "semi" lesbians (a term I heard just today), there is often a subtle form of exclusion which happens within our community whereby women are excluded from the community if they do not conform fully to the standards that lesbians are often judged.

Granted, this type of judgement does not pertain to all of us in the community and most of us feel repugnant towards the notion that we could discriminate against our own lesbian sisters. But consider this:

-- For two decades I have known I am a lesbian and no matter what I do or say I will always be a lesbian. However, I have always believed that if I met a man that I felt romantic love for, I would enter into a relationship with him, based on our emotional bond. Yet every time I have imaged what this would be like, I have feared that I would be judged and excluded from the lesbian community because of my relationship with that man.

-- During my tenure organizing against Amendment 2, numerous women attempted to join the campaign who, for various reasons, were uncomfortable coming out during the campaign. There were many complaints against them, such as "How can you be queer and believe in yourself, if you won't come out?" Read: You're not proud of yourself and if you're not proud of your sexual orientation, you can't be fully involved in this campaign or this community.

-- A lesbian (who has been visibly active in the Colorado Springs lesbian and gay civil rights movement for the past many years) recently became involved with a gay man. For many women in our community, this relationship was an act of betrayal to the gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgendered civil rights movement. Some even suggested she remove herself from queer politics.

Let us begin with the political. The gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgendered movement has unfortunately become obsessed with the issue of "choice". The rhetoric of the Radical Right has forced the media, mass consciousness and Congress to beg for proof that sexual orientation is NOT a matter of choice. If this cannot be proven, goes the story, then clearly this "deviant" behavior can be altered and all g/l/b/t people can rectify their abhorrent activities. (In my opinion, this rhetoric only serves to convolute the question of civil rights. Civil rights are not meant to be doled out according to biology or choice; civil rights protections are granted to groups who are in historic need of such protections.) Nonetheless, due to the fact that there is a national debate persisting on this issue, people believe it is important that, as a community, we do not offer evidence that sexual orientation is based on choice. And, if we do not portray rigid and consistent imagery about gay and lesbian persons, we are apt to strengthen the arguments of the Religious Right.

On the personal level, there is obviously a protectiveness that many of us feel about our community. In a world that is against us (for the most part), we often feel we have only one place to turn to for sympathy and comfort and that is to other queers. What happens to our precious community if all lesbians become closeted, or start sleeping with men as well as women? Will this alter the very fabric of the community that we call home and take away some of our fragile feelings of belonging which protect us from the hate?

cont'd on pg. 11

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cont'd from pg. 10

Second, I know that for many of us the most difficult thing we will ever do is to come out. We take comfort in knowing that there are others around us who are out, others out there to disperse the immense amount of homophobia that this society puts upon us, ensuring that if we come out we will not be the sole subject of discrimination.

Third, and most important, I think some of us are scared of seeing ourselves in the images of others who challenge the rigid definitions of "gay" and "lesbian". Though I, like many, resent the notion that all people are born bisexual, (for I think that there are many hets and queers alike who are solely queer or solely straight) there are many of us lesbians out there who have had, once or twice, visions of romantic and/or sexual relationships with men since we have come out to ourselves. Does this necessarily indicate that these lesbians are actually bisexual? Of course not. It means that our minds have used the power of imagination that we are born with. It is as human for us to imagine a heterosexual encounter as it is for a heterosexual to imagine a homosexual encounter -- and don't we often balk at hets who say they never have had even the slightest curiosity about what it would be like?

All of these arguments hold water when taken at face value. When deconstructed, however, I come to the conclusion that those of us who are judgmental and insecure about other lesbians' identities, need to reconsider where these feelings come from.

On the political level, we need to free ourselves of the nature vs. nurture debate and bring the discussion back to the real issue which is that people who are thought to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered, are discriminated against. Secondly, if a person claims that she is a lesbian, then the world treats her as a lesbian and she therefore has the voice of legitimacy to talk about some of the ways that lesbians and gay men are discriminated against. If a person does effective work for the movement, the criteria we should use to judge that person should be professional and not personal.

On the personal level, we need to remember that our identities are fundamentally based within ourselves. No matter what happens with those around us, we are lesbians when we know we are lesbians. No one, no community, no bigotry, can take that away from us. We need to stop feeling threatened by how others choose to live their lives.

Does this last argument sound familiar? This is what we say to the Radical Right and their constituents when they take such offense to gay and lesbian people. Our lives, our sexuality, who we love and who we sleep with should not affect them, as it should not negatively affect us how those in our community live their lives. And while I recognize that it is easier to take our anger out on those who are around us, rather than the monolithic mass that is against us, I cannot excuse the irrational type of thinking that alienates members of the gay and lesbian community. We must rise above such mentality and welcome all people who are gay and lesbian, regardless of how they answer the six questions that I began this article with.

(Please note that this article was "ghost written".)

Of **600** gay and bisexual male Milwaukeeans, **73%** said they've had sex in the past six months with someone they never saw again.

SOURCE: U.S. Conference of Mayors


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# REAL LIFE

## Women in love: More than just a fashion statement

Hey, girls! Guess what? It's hip to be gay! Your coolest fashion acessory this season is your girlfriend. Who says so? Harpers & Queen, the Sunday Times, the New York Times and every other paper that can scramble on the bandwagon and get a couple of sultry entwined lovelies on their feature pages before the deadline.

Why are lesbians getting their 15 minutes of fame? The usual hodgepodge of reasons which usher in a "trend": last year's Vanity Fair cover featuring k.d. lang and Cindy Crawford in a clinch; a new novel by Jeanette Winterson; Go Fish, a new lesbian film about to open; lesbian storylines on Brookside and EastEnders. We've had AIDS awareness and gender bending, so what's left? Lesbians -- but they'll need a lot of airbrushing first. Because up to now haven't we been under the impression that they are hairy-legged, with shaved heads, clad in dungarees?

Not as reinterpreted by the media, 1994 has been the summer of lipstick lesbians, in the words of Harpers & Queen, those "beautiful **things: waifs straying across the sexual divide with no hint of the butch about them. They are subtle seductresses, alive to a light touch or glance at a party, soft skin, and perfumed silk.**" In other words, a six-stone weakling with no mouth or attitude, who won't give any trouble when homophobia is back in fashion.

If lesbians have until now avoided the limelight of media vogueishness, it is because male editors and journalists don't know what to make of them. Here's Harry Carpenter writing in the Sun recently on the news that Sixties tennis star Maria Bueno was not what she seems: "I was utterly appalled when I found out the Brazilian star was a lesbian. I couldn't help thinking it was such a waste. She had stunning natural black hair and a beautiful face with a flawless complexion."

When confronted by the rumour that a beautiful woman is gay the male brain finds the information does not compute. It's not as if she can't get a man, it puzzles, though no one ever suggested it was impossible for Rock Hudson to be homosexual because he was a hunk.

In New York, according to Christine Vachon, executive director of Go Fish, "**the 15 minutes of fame for lesbian chic has already begun to fade. The film has tremendous potential to cross over, but it was a film made by and for lesbians, and if that's where it stays, it's okay by me -- and if it can use the sudden interest in dykedom, then that's fine with me too. I don't complain. But there's always been a titillation factor in movies if you look at some of the things that Garbo and Dietrich were allowed to get away with. Look at perfume ads, look at pornography. It's just that, at the moment, we're flavour of the month.**"

When the media attention recedes, and the Harpers waifs dump their gay friends to move back in with their boyfriends, some women will still be lesbians. How do they feel about their current status as fashion accessory?

Sophia Chauchard-Stuart, 25, works as a secretary and writes for the gay press. Round the dining-room table at her flat in south London are three other friends, Sadie Lee, 27, a painter with a one-woman show opeing in September in Manchester, Emma Hindley, 32, and Jo Smith, 25, both working in television and film.

"You have the illusion when you see all this stuff in the press that it's never going to be a problem **again," says Jo. "But it's a form of sexual titillation dressed up as political correctness." For Emma, "the thing about designer dykes is that it's not the dykes who are setting the agenda, it's straight** journalists. A lot of my straight friends say, 'You're in the press, you're on telly, now what do you want?'"

To be able to walk down the street holding hands with their girlfriend without being screamed at, not to be treated as a freak, they say. Putting up with everyday discrimination is a truer picture of life as a gay woman, rather than the sexual tourism promoted by Harpers & Queen. Emma has had bricks thrown through her window by local kids. At the news this week that a lesbian couple had made legal history by winning a High Court ruling making them joint parents of a 22-month-old child, Emma Nicholson retorted "I am immensely unhappy when adult sexual behaviour inflicts a distorted lifestyle on children.

cont'd on pg. 13

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cont'd from pg. 12

I believe strenuously that every child deserves a mother and a father."

A social worker tells of her experience with a local authority continually pilloried by the media for its so-called "loony left" policies. A 14-year-old boy came out to her when she was employed as a residential care worker because he knew she was gay herself. She advised him to contact a teenage gay and lesbian group to talk through his feelings, and to get some sex education. She was subsequently accused of encouraging him to become a rent boy and after she left her post she was banned from ever seeing again the children who had once been in her care.

Another woman recently came out of a club in Smithfield, London, and hailed a taxi. When it arrived, she briefly hugged and kissed her girlfriend goodnight before getting in. As they drove off the driver told her that it was all right for her to kiss her friend in this way, but what he couldn't stand was lesbians. He then began a tirade of abuse. When she told him she was gay, he screeched to a halt and ordered her out of the cab, leaving her stranded. "You're always reading about queer-bashing," she says, "but I know lesbians who have been drived into alleys by gangs of thugs and beaten up."

Certainly attitudes towards gay women have softened in the past two decades, partly because of high profile lesbians such as Martina Navratilova, k.d. lang, Jeanette Winterson, Sandra Bernhard, painter Maggi Hambling, journalist Bea Campbell and soap stars Pam St. Clements and Polly Perkins. But many remain closeted because they fear discrimination in their careers. "We know who they are because we see them at our clubs," says Sophia. "The actresses say they won't get straight roles if they come out -- so what roles will they get? It's hard for older actresses to find parts anyway. A lot of powerful people in the theatre are gay, but they're men who aren't interested in women."

At the moment there are no openly lesbian woman politicians. In Portraits of the Hall: Historic Lesbian Lives Unveiled, author Rose Collis dusted off the memory of Maureen Colquhoun, Labour MP for Northampton North from 1974 to 1979. Before Tony Marlow took her seat for the Conservatives, she barely survived attempts by the Labour Party to deselect her, apparently because she had left her husband and was openly living with Barbara Todd, founder of a lesbian magazine.

After an unsuccessful attempt to be nominated as the Labour candidate for Brecon and Radnor in 1981, Colquhoun served as a local councillor in Hackney and has since retired. At the Labour Party press office, no one had heard of her.

**"Why is it acceptable for Chris Smith to be an MP and Michael Cashman to apply to be a candidate, when, in the 80s and 90s, the nearest out lesbians can get to political office is as unsalaried leaders of councils?" Rose Collis asks.**

If Sophia, Emma, Jo and Sadie represent the image of what a lesbian is allowed to be -- young, attractive, metropolitan, working in the safe haven of the trendy end of the media -- what is life like for older lesbians? Stella, 41, until recently was employed by the BBC. When she tried to tell her colleagues that she was a lesbian, she found her career was thwarted.

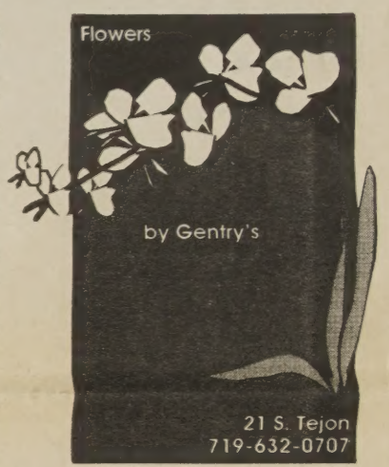
"The BBC is still largely run by men," she says. "One boss really took against me when he discovered I was gay, and that served as a lesson to me. What it means now is that people you work iwth are perplexed by your silence. They don't know what's going on in your life and they don't like that. I don't believe there are all these confident young women about because I don't see them. It's interesting that the Brookside storyline is not about a lipstick lesbian. Someone is telling them what's what, about the real agony of coming out, which is not in the least bit chic."

Sally Hunter, 48, a social worker in East Anglia, has cast her eye over the summer's features. "When one sees the approved photographs of the new lipstick lesbians, they are invariably young and beautiful if not also rich and famous. I'm glad for them, but I have very mixed feelings about their happiness if it glides over the day-to-day difficulties of what it's like for the rest of us."

Last year Lesbian Line, a London-based telephone help-line, dealt with 6,500 calls and hundreds of letters from women too frightened even to pick up the phone. "If lipstick lesbians are now finding life a little easier, it's not because of articles saying that lesbianism is in vogue," according to Bev, a spokeswoman for the organisation. "Women who look beautiful will always have an easier time, whether they're gay or straight. But the reality here is women crying on the phone every day of the week."

With or without their lipstick, and when their 15 minutes of fame are up, lesbians will still be dealing with discrimination.

(This piece was taken from the July 3, 1994 issue of The Independent on Sunday -- London, England -- written by Linda Grant)



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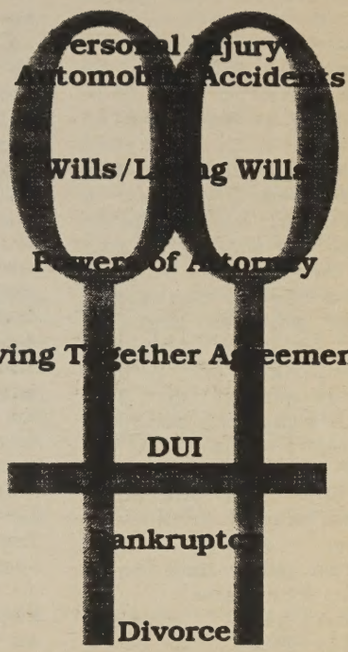


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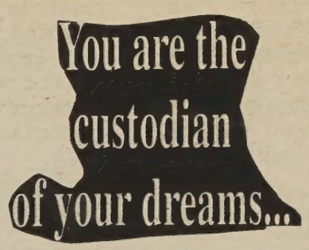


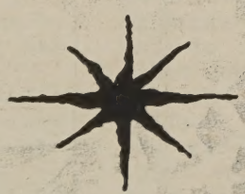

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NEWS-NEWS-NEWS

* Attorney General Janet Reno has allowed lesbians and gays to seek political asylum here (in the U.S.) if they are victims of persecution because of their sexuality.

* Judy Nelson, Martina's former squeeze, has signed a one-year contract with the Ford Modeling agency.


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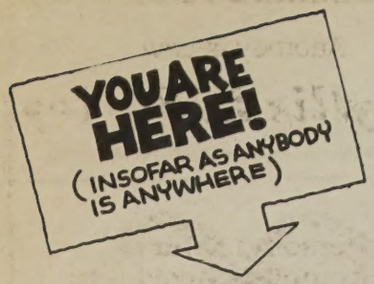



# BACK PAGE

BY RAMONA LIDMILA

## Everybody loves Martina in defeat

When did we start caring about Martina Navratilova? At gate four, outside Wimbledon on July 2nd, as Martina made her last appearance inside, there was an alarming man from Scotland. He was wearing a scarlet tee-shirt -- "Jesus Saves" -- and a Union Jack handkerchief around his neck and dark glasses. He was waving a placard at passing motorists that read "By Christ You Are Saved". He talked of a past in drugs and violence, and here, you felt sure, was someone in some way hostile to Martina Navratilova, glad to see her go: a foreigner, a lesbian, this great "brute" of a person in spectacles, who year after year trampled over all those nice cute girls from western Europe. No, he was not glad, said the Scotsman. "I haven't got the right to judge anybody," he said and smiled rather sweetly. (That wouldn't have been the case, had she been playing in Colorado Springs. Need I say more?)

Somehow, after all this time -- 22 Wimbledon appearances, nine championships -- Martina had the world behind her. Love would not be the only word, but "respect" and more than a kind of affection. The crowds ambling about in overfilled casual clothes on the dry grass at Wimbledon made one thing clear: large, fierce public figures are indeed able to reposition themselves (even in the English imagination) and become heroes.

It's taken 37-year-old Martina a while to reach this point, "longer than I thought it would have" she has said. First she was a Communist waif, "like that girl they brought over from Sarajevo" said one spectator, then she was an American businesswoman with an Aspen lifestyle and an oversized (in some people's minds) entourage.

History and Wimbledon go hand in hand. But on a day when the past was on everyone's mind, the future took center stage as Conchita Martinez thrillingly denied Martina a 10th women's singles title on her last appearance at the All England Club. But on July 2nd, she gave everything. Her touch had not diminished, nor had her guile or tactical sophistication.

**The greatest Wimbledon career ended when Martina missed a backhand by 18 inches. She stood for a moment, gazing down at the grass as Conchita flung her racket into the air. Then, the two embraced at the net, and the crowd were on their feet, knowing they'd remember where they had been this day for a very long time.**

I will remember her for having that great gift of wanting to bring a crowd into a match, to make a crowd feel that they are part of it. I will miss her. We all will.

### Seconds Anyone?
by Eve Rupic

I've always had a great yearning to make a film. But, after learning my wallet's not fat enough (and I don't have a clue as to HOW a film's even made), I decided to suggest the following:

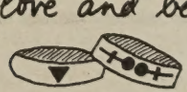
Choice #1: Where the Boys Are Not -- A daring, groundbreaking film, the biggest budget lesbian picture yet put on celluloid. Released just in time for next spring break. A motley band of same-sex preferrers search for eligible mates with huge trust funds at a secluded nude beach near Fort Lauderdale. Sandra Bernhard replaces Paula Prentiss, the "tall girl" in the original movie; this time, her altitude is not viewed as an obstacle to romantic and sexual bliss. With Martina Navratilova, Phranc, k.d. lang, and a cast of dozens. Pretty steamy stuff here.

Choice #2: Single White Female Can't Jump -- Teamed with Jennifer Capriati at the U.S. Open as the highly promotable "Two Jennifers," Jennifer Jason Leigh becomes unhinged when she suspects her callow partner has tanked a doubles match with Steffi Graf and Gabriella Sabatini. Combines the suspenseful tennis sequences of Strangers on a Train with the mouthwatering locker room footage of Personal Best.

Choice #3: Francis the Talking Mule of Assisi -- Four-footed beast of burden gifted with the power of snide speech proves a much more persuasive spokesman for pacifism and kindness to animals than was the Italian monk whom he replaced. A highly recommended film for kiddies of little faith.

So, does anyone wanna lend me some money? Or send me to film school?

Summer's here
It's that time of year
Let's all be proud to
love and be queer.



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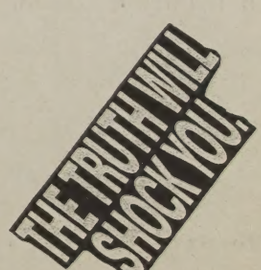

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